DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 120 423 CE 006 660

AUTHOR Pettigrew, Nancy J.; Boyd, Virlyn A.
TITLE Career Orientations of Female Students Enrolling in Agricultural Curricula at Clemson University.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented to the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists, Rural Sociology Section (Mobile, Alabama, February 2-4, 1976)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Agriculture; *College Majors; *Comparative Analysis; *Females; Home Economics; *Personal Values; Speeches; Statistical Analysis; Student Attitudes; Tables (Data); *Work Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS South Carolina; *Winthrop College

ABSTRACT

The study determined the occupational values of 166 female home economics freshmen and 33 female agricultural freshmen at Winthrop College by asking the question: "In picking the job you would most like to have, how important are the following things about the job?" The freshmen rated by importance seven items: (1) high salary, (2) steady employment, (3) independence, (4) presents a challenge, (5) prestige, (6) control (power and authority) over others, and (7) advancement. The results are summarized in seven tables. The findings would tend to indicate that differences between the responses of the home economics majors and those of the agricultural majors were not as pronounced as was anticipated. Of the seven values, the only statistically significant difference was home economics majors tended to rate steady employment and prestige more important than agricultural majors. After finding few differences in the expressed job-related values by major curriculum, the data were analyzed for differences associated with the race of the students. Significant differences were found between white and black females majoring in home economics in their valuations of salary, steady employment, control over others, chance for advancement, and independence; blacks found them important more often than whites. (BP)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED120423

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Career Orientations of Female Students Enrolling in Agricultural Curricula at Clemson University 1/

Nancy J. Pettigrew and Virlyn A. Boyd 2/

MAR 08 1976

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to compare the occupational values of freshman female students enrolling in agricultural curricula at Clemson University with those of females enrolling in home economics, a more traditional female major, in other colleges in South Carolina.

Background Information

Continued economic development in our society has increased the demand for female labor, which, combined with demographically induced shifts in the supply of women has resulted in a considerable rise in the participation of women in the labor force (1). Along with this increased labor-force participation, has come an increasing motivation to achieve and perform in the same spheres and with the same skills as men (2).

As women's work roles expand, they are likely to become less satisfied with the traditional female occupations. This would result in increasing pressures among some women to break out of these traditional female occupations into occupations hitherto dominated by males (1).

Education is one channel whereby women may gain entry into male-dominated occupations. One indication of this breakaway from traditional female occupations is the increase in the number of females entering college curricula once dominated by males. Agriculture is such a curricula.

Do these females who are selecting majors dominated by males differ from females who are choosing traditional female majors? One area in which these differences might be expressed is that of occupational values. These values have been stressed repeatedly in the literature as one of the key factors upon which occupational choice is based (3). "Occupational values are said to evolve from the individual's beliefs, attitudes and interests, and are supposed to motivate one toward certain occupational goals" (4).

1/ Paper presented at the Rural Sociology Section, Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists, Mobile, Alabama, February 2-4, 1976.

2/ Agricultural Science Associate and Associate Professor of Rural Sociology, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, Clemson University, respectively.

CE008880

The hypothesis examined in this paper is that the occupational values of females electing to major in traditional female curricula such as Home Economics differ from those of females electing to major in the traditionally male curricula in agriculture.

Data

The data were obtained from a research project being conducted jointly by the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology at Clemson University and the Schools of Home Economics at South Carolina State College and Winthrop College. The overall objective of the project is to determine career orientations of college students majoring in Agriculture and Home Economics in South Carolina. Early in the fall semester of the 1975-76 school year, questionnaires were administered to entering freshmen majoring in Agriculture and Home Economics in 4-year colleges or universities throughout the state. An attempt was made to acquire questionnaires from all students. Variations of the group interview technique were used with the questionnaires being administered to freshmen courses where the subject students were enrolled. At Winthrop, the questionnaire was administered during freshman orientation. Questionnaires were obtained from 166 female Home Economics freshmen and 33 female Agricultural freshmen.

The question used to determine occupational values was as follows:

> "In picking the job you would most like to have, how important are the following things about the job?"

The students were asked to assign a degree of importance in terms of very important, important, not very important, or not at all important to a series of items. For the purposes of this paper, the ratings of importance given to the following items will be presented:

a) offers you the chance to earn a high salary,
b) gives you steady employment,
c) chance to be independent,
d) presents a challenge,
e) prestige,
f) gives you control (power and authority) over others, and
g) change for advancement.

These results are summarized in Tables 1 through 7.

Findings

Differences between the responses of the Home Economics majors and those of the Agricultural majors were not as pronounced as was anticipated. The differences in responses according to major were statistically significant only for the values of steady employment and prestige.* It is interesting

---

* Chi Square was used to test significant differences. Differences were considered significant if the .05 level of confidence was reached.

to note that these values were considered more important to the females majoring in home economics than they were to the females majoring in agriculture.

Providing a chance to be independent and work that presents a challenge were considered quite important by both Agriculture and Home Economics majors. This interest in a chance to be independent in selecting a future job indicates that there is a desire among these students to enter professions that offer freedom of expression and flexibility in their work. The importance assigned to challenging work implies that, at least for these students, materialistic aspects of the job are not the only important considerations in selecting a future job.

After finding few differences in the expressed job-related values of the female students by major curriculum, the data were analyzed to determine any differences in these values associated with the race of the students. Since there were no black females majoring in agriculture, it was not possible to compare responses for black females majoring in home economics with those of black females majoring in agriculture. Tables 1 through 7 do include comparisons of responses for black females majoring in home economics with responses of white females majoring in home economics. Again, the Chi Square Test of significance was utilized.

Significant differences were found between the white and black females majoring in home economics in their valuations of salary, steady employment, control over others, chance for advancement, and independence. The black home economics majors tended to value these aspects of the job as important more often than did their white counterparts. The tendency of the black females to assign high importance to these values is not surprising. In the past, jobs most characteristic of black females have been associated with low salary and prestige, and represented little challenge or independence. Therefore, these values become especially important to the young black females who are entering colleges and universities today.

The white females majoring in agriculture and the white females majoring in home economics differed significantly in their assessment of the importance of steady employment and prestige in selecting a lifetime job. The white female home economics majors tended to rate these values as important more often than did the white female agriculture majors. This could be an indication that the females choosing the less traditional majors are also attaching less importance to the more traditional values associated with a choice of an occupation.

Summary

These findings would tend to indicate that at least for one aspect of the job selection process, that of occupational values, difference between those females electing traditional female majors and females opting for traditionally male dominated majors are not very apparent. Differences in five of the seven values examined were not found to be significant.

There were greater variations between the responses of white and black females majoring in home economics than between those of females in home economics and those in agriculture.

For this group of females it would appear that factors other than occupational values, account for the differences between those females selecting home economics and those females selecting agriculture majors.

References

1. Oppenheimer, Valerie K. "Demographic Influence of Female Employment and the Status of Women," American Journal of Sociology, January 1973.

2. Papanek, Hanna. "Men, Women and Work," American Journal of Sociology, January 1973.

3. Glick, Peter. The Occupational Choice, the Occupational Values, and the Anticipated Occupational Frustrations of the Agricultural Majors of Delaware Valley College of Science and Agriculture, unpublished dissertation, June 1962.

4. Corey, Fay L. Values of Future Teachers, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955).

Table 1. Importance of Salary as an Occupational Value of a Sample of Female Agricultural and Home Economics Freshman in South Carolina by Race, 1975

Degree of Importance	Agricultural Female*		Home Economics Females					
	White		Total		Black		White	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very important	4	12.1	51	30.7	26	65.0	25	19.8
Important	15	45.4	68	41.0	12	30.0	56	44.5
Not very important	10	30.3	30	18.1	2	5.0	28	22.2
Not at all important	4	12.1	17	10.2			17	13.5
No answer								

*There were no black agricultural females in the sample.

Differences	χ^2	df	p <
Agricultural & Home Economics Majors	5.7203	3	.80
Black and White Home Economics Majors	32.0790	3	.005
White Agricultural & White Home Economics Majors	1.6122	3	.30

Table 2. Importance of Steady Employment as an Occupational Value of a Sample of Female Agricultural and Home Economics Freshman in South Carolina by Race, 1975

Degree of Importance	Agricultural Females*		Home Economics Females					
	White		Total		Black		White	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very important	13	39.4	34	20.5	29	72.5	5	4.0
Important	14	42.4	18	10.8	11	27.5	7	5.5
Not very important	5	15.2	61	36.7			61	48.4
Not at all important	1	3.0	52	31.4			52	41.3
No answer			1	0.6			1	0.8

*There were no black agricultural females in the sample.

Differences	x^2	df	$p \leq$
Agricultural & Home Economics Majors	33.2524	3	.005
Black & White Home Economics Majors	118.4861	3	.005
White Agricultural & White Home Economics Majors	73.9991	3	.005

Table 3. Importance of Independence as an Occupational Value of a Sample of Female Agricultural and Home Economics Freshman in South Carolina by Race, 1975

Degree of Importance	Agricultural Females*		Home Economics Females					
	White		Total		Black		White	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very important	14	42.4	56	33.7	20	50.0	36	28.6
Important	15	45.5	61	36.7	13	32.5	48	38.1
Not very important	3	9.1	35	21.2	7	17.5	28	22.2
Not at all important	1	3.0	13	7.8			13	10.3
No answer			1	0.6			1	0.8

*There were no black agricultural females in the sample.

Differences	X^2	df	p <
Agricultural & Home Economics Majors	4.1953	3	.70
Black & White Home Economics Majors	8.8011	3	.95
White Agricultural & White Home Economics Majors	5.8144	3	.80

Table 4. Importance of Challenge as an Occupational Value of a Sample of Female Agricultural and Home Economics Freshman in South Carolina by Race, 1975

Degree of Importance	Agricultural Females		Home Economics Females					
	White		Total		Black		White	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very Important	23	69.7	90	54.2	18	45.0	72	57.1
Important	9	27.3	63	37.9	20	50.0	43	34.1
Not very important	1	3.0	7	4.3	1	2.5	6	4.7
Not at all important			5	3.0	1	2.5	4	3.2
No answer			1	0.6			1	0.8

Differences	X^2	df	$p <$
Agricultural & Home Economics Majors	3.1061	3	.60
Black & White Home Economics Majors	3.2402	3	.60
White Agricultural & White Home Economics Majors	2.2789	3	.40

Table 5. Importance of Prestige as an Occupational Value of a Sample of Female Agricultural and Home Economics Freshman in South Carolina by Race, 1975

Degree of Importance	Agricultural Females		Home Economics Females					
	White		Total		Black		White	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very Important	1	3.0	50	30.1	9	22.5	41	32.6
Important	4	12.1	63	37.9	21	52.5	42	33.3
Not very important	15	45.5	36	21.7	8	20.0	28	22.2
Not at all important	12	36.4	12	7.3	1	2.5	11	8.7
No answer	1	3.0	5	3.0	1	2.5	4	3.2

Differences	X^2	df	p <
Agricultural & Home Economics Majors	38.7852	3	.005
Black & White Home Economics Majors	5.6325	3	.80
White Agricultural & White Home Economics Majors	31.7843	3	.005

Table 6. Importance of Control Over Others as an Occupational Value of a Sample of Freshman Agricultural and Home Economics Freshman in South Carolina by Race, 1975

Degree of Importance	Agricultural Females White		Home Economics Females Total		Black		White	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very important	1	3.0	15	9.0	4	10.0	11	8.7
Important	3	9.2	19	11.5	11	27.5	8	6.3
Not very important	18	54.5	81	48.8	20	50.0	61	48.5
Not at all important	10	30.3	50	30.1	5	12.5	45	35.7
No answer	1	3.0	1	0.6			1	0.8

Differences	X^2	df	p <
Agricultural & Home Economics Majors	1.4318	3	.30
Black & White Home Economics Majors	17.2954	3	.005
White Agricultural & White Home Economics Majors	1.8404	3	.30

Table 7. Importance of Advancement as an Occupational Value of a Sample of Female Agricultural and Home Economics Freshman in South Carolina by Race, 1975

Degree of Importance	Agricultural Females		Home Economics Females					
	White		Total		Black		White	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very Important	11	33.3	64	38.6	28	70.0	36	28.6
Important	7	21.2	58	34.9	8	20.0	50	39.7
Not very important	10	30.3	23	13.9	4	10.0	19	15.1
Not at all important	5	15.2	18	10.8			18	14.3
No answer			3	1.8			3	2.4

Differences	X^2	df	$p \leq$
Agricultural & Home Economics Majors	6.6298	3	.100
Black & White Home Economics Majors	16.4054	3	.005
White Agricultural & White Home Economics Majors	5.3270	3	.250